

# News from Ed Markey

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## **Rep. Markey asks President Bush to take action on cargo screening**

*Markey responds to a government report on aviation security loopholes*

WASHINGTON, DC – Representative Markey, member of the Select Committee on Homeland Security made the following statement today responding to a NY Times investigation on loopholes in aviation security cited by a government report.

“Today’s report is a solemn reminder that our aviation system remains at the top of Al Qaeda’s terrorist target list. Three and a half years after the devastating September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks, glaring security gaps continue to put Americans at risk of another terrorist attack that uses airplanes to inflict serious damage on our country. The Bush Administration continues to block a security requirement that would mandate that all cargo carried on passenger planes be screened before it is loaded onboard. We know that Al Qaeda is determined to find weak links in our homeland defenses. Clearly, failure to screen cargo on passenger planes is an unacceptable soft spot in our aviation security that leaves passengers and crew members dangerously vulnerable. I call on the Bush Administration to support my efforts to require that all cargo transported on passenger planes is screened, just as all passengers and their baggage are subjected to screening. There are other significant reforms that the Bush Administration should immediately implement to make our skies safer from terrorist attack, such as improving security at small airports that may be more easily penetrated by terrorists and ensuring that flight attendants – who are expected to help protect travelers in the event of a terrorist attack in the passenger cabin – receive the meaningful counter-terror training they need to perform their difficult jobs.”

Last year, Representative Markey introduced H.R. 3798, the Secure Existing Aviation Loopholes (SEAL) Act to strengthen the ability of the US to prevent terrorists from using aircraft to carry out their deadly plans. Markey will re-introduce legislation soon to close the dangerous cargo loophole and other security gaps that could provide terrorists with opportunities to conduct another 9/11-style attack against the US.

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